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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [DPKO](#) [CG](#)
SUBJECT: PRE-EMPTIVE ATTACK BY NKUNDA FORCES UNSUCCESSFUL

REF: KINSHASA 1846

Classified By: PolOff TJNaber, reasons 1.4 b/d.

¶1. (SBU) Three relatively calm weeks between pro-Nkunda and FARDC forces in North Kivu ended December 27 with an early morning pre-emptive attack by the former. According to MONUC, pro-Nkunda forces began firing at 3am on FARDC soldiers of the 1st Reserve Brigade in the hills outside Runyoni, near the village of Jomba. The two sides had remained stalemated at Runyoni since December 8 (reftel). Intermittent fighting continued much of the day at Kasebeya, Nyarubara, and Kabasanza, ended toward evening, and began again December 28. Pro-Nkunda forces failed to capture any FARDC positions.

¶2. (SBU) In the afternoon on December 27, FARDC reinforced its positions with four truckloads of soldiers of the 92nd Brigade to Bunagana and one company to nearby Shangi. They also reportedly prepared attack helicopters in Goma for possible deployment. A MONUC political officer could not confirm media reports of 18 pro-Nkunda troop deaths. He said the count came from FARDC sources, who may be inclined to exaggerate. FARDC requested MONUC assistance to evacuate 10 wounded FARDC soldiers, but the MONUC North Kivu Brigade did not directly assist the FARDC in combat.

¶3. (C) The MONUC political officer told us he considered the pre-emptive attack a "desperate move" by pro-Nkunda forces trying to expand their influence along the Ugandan border to facilitate reinforcements and resupply. They may have been encouraged to renew fighting by a December 25 FARDC decision to move troops out of the area and concentrate them at Rumangabo, ten kilometers away. MONUC military sources said the decision was against advice from the MONUC North Kivu Brigade not to reduce FARDC combat strength in Runyoni.
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